DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 021 920 UD 005 951

By- Hammond, Bert D.
PROJECT OPEN FUTURE.
Pomona Coll., Claremont, Calif.
Pub Date Jan 68
Note- 4p.
Journal Cit- Pomona Today; v65 n4 Jan 1968
EDRS Price MF- $0.25 HC- $0.24
Descriptors- *COLLEGE PREPARATION, *COLLEGE SCHOOL COOPERATION, *DISADVANTAGED YOUTH, FINANCIAL SUPPORT, *JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, PARENT PARTICIPATION, *REMEDIAL PROGRAMS, RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS, SUMMER PROGRAMS
Identifiers- California, California Association of Independent Achools, Claremont Colleges, Los Angeles, Project Open Future

Project Open Future offers a summer residential program and Saturday classes during the school year to about 200 disadvantaged junior high school students selected from the East Los Angeles, Compton, and Watts areas. Instruction is given in reading, written and verbal expression, mathematics, science, and social studies. Computer training and a variety of cultural and recreational activities are also available. Each class has from three to six students grouped homogenously according to grade and subject matter proficiency. The students are expected to continue in the program until they complete high school at which time it is expected that they will be prepared to do college work. Parents are encouraged to participate in the project's activities, and plans are being made to offer them adult education courses. (LB)

Pomona Today V. 65 n. 4 Jan 1968

Many junior high school students from Watts, Compton and East Los Angeles are tutored each Saturday in Claremont

Project Open Future

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

ED021920
UD 005 957

BY BERT D. HAMMOND, DIRECTOR

THE CLAREMONT COLLEGES, the California Association of Independent Schools, the Los Angeles and Compton school districts are the joint sponsors of Project Open Future. Project Open Future is unique in the field of education. Indeed the fact that these institutions represent such a broad spectrum of the educational field and varying educational philosophies is of itself unique. Much more important, however, is that they have joined together in sponsoring a program which seeks to identify potential college students at the junior high school level in urban areas characterized by extremely high secondary school drop-out rates. Even more unique is it that upon identification and selection, the Project Open Future students are then involved for a five year period in a program whose design is "to assist a significant number of able students into the mainstream of higher education in California and in the country." Basic to this whole concept is that of the academic preparation of students who presently lack the educational opportunities, motivation, and knowledge of opportunities in colleges and universities.

The manner in which Project Open Future came into being can be described somewhat as a modern day miracle. In a real sense it came about as the result of men and women who were perceptive enough to see the need of relating institutions of a diverse nature to the growing problems of urban education. At the offset such men as David Twichell, headmaster of Thacher School in Ojai, and Paul Raymond, a teacher at Midland School, were guided by a concern that their schools become more attuned to the practical everyday problems of modern day society. In the summer of 1964, both Midland and Thacher embarked on an experimental summer program which was to lay the groundwork for Project Open Future. The programs were essentialiy remedial in nature. They were for one summer only and sought to identify youngsters who could become full time students at either Thacher or Midland. In exploring the possibilities of expanding these two programs it became apparent that at the very optimum such an effort would involve only a fraction of the great number of potential students available.

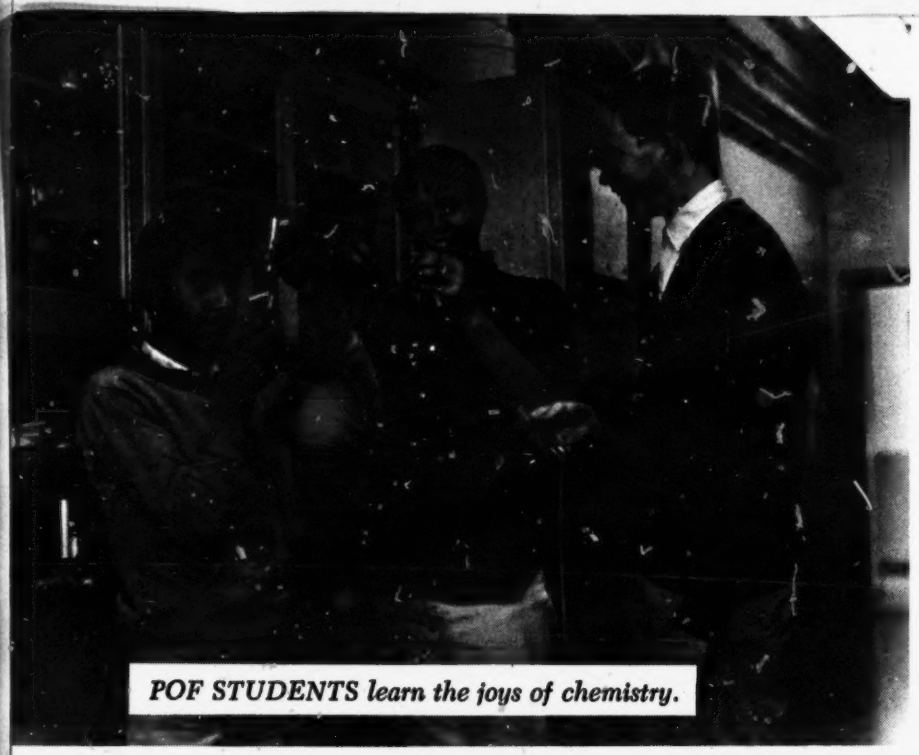
POMONA STUDENT meets her Saturday class — as a teacher. (Photos by Chris Askew '70.)

Not only did Thacher and Midland establish the experimental foundation for the project but they also acted as a basis through which an ever broadening number of interested persons did become involved. The Reverend James Hargett, Minister of The Church of Christian Fellowship, and the Reverend James Jones, Minister of Westminster Presbyterian Church and member of the L.A. School Board, became involved as liaison persons in the Los Angeles area. Chaplain Edgar Reckard of The Claremont Colleges furnished leadership for what came to be known as the planning committee which consisted of sixteen members who came together for one year and worked out the details of Project Open Future. They are: Sarah Rugg, President of the CAIS; Elizabeth Edmundson, Headmistress of Pasadena's Westridge School; Karl Munger of Midland; Juanita Drew and John Graham of the Compton school district; Dr. Ross Miller, Compton School Board member; Dr. Wilson Jordan of the Los Angeles School District; Reverend James Joseph and Father Lawrence Rouillard, The Claremont Colleges; Reverend Leslie Larsen, The Thacher School; and Mr. Brian Davis, The Midland School; along with those listed previously.

During the planning year this Committee received an initial grant of one thousand dollars from CAIS to allow its members to continue the search for funding of the project. Two "seed grants" were established, one from the Rosenberg Foundation and the other from the Hancock Foundation. The work of the Planning Committee led to the establishment of two major grants, one from the Danforth Foundation and the other from The Carnegie Corporation of New York. By late May of 1967 one hundred and eighty students had been selected, a project director had been employed, an evaluation team established, and the project was well on its way to start as of June, 1967. The Planning Committee which had begun with little more than faith in a concept had accomplished what at times must have seemed impossible.

Project Open Future selectees come from East and Central Los Angeles, Compton, and Watts. Students within these areas are selected from Markham, Carver, Edison, Drew, Stevenson, Belvedere, and Griffith junior high schools in Los Angeles; and Willowbrook, Bunche, and Vanguard junior high schools in Compton. In the first year, 188 students from grades seven through nine were selected. Sixty seventh grade girls; forty seventh grade boys; forty eighth grade boys; and forty-eight ninth grade boys were selected. Selection after the first year will be made only in the seventh grade.

All students involved in Project Open Future are selected for a five year period. During this time students participate in the two major yearly phases of the Project. These two phases are what has come to be called the "summer residential" program and the "fall-winter" program. Every summer each student participates in a five week residential program conducted by one of the participating independent schools. Participating independent schools in the summer residential programs are Thacher, Westridge, The Webb School of California, and Midland. This past year, forty eighth grade boys were housed on the Scripps College campus and participated in a program conducted by The Webb School. Mr. Bankcroft Greene of Webb's regular staff was director of the eighth grade program. Classes were conducted in English, social studies, mathematics, and general science. A great emphasis throughout all programs was placed on expression through reading and writing. By having our office at The Claremont Colleges we were able to become much more inimately involved with both the Westridge and the Webb programs. Mr. Steve Hanley of The Webb School not only was an outstanding English teacher but



POF STUDENTS learn the joys of chemistry.

also established relationships with our POF youngsters which have had tremendous value to the program. Some of the most valuable face-to-face relationships were established during the group discussions or individual tutoring sessions that were held in faculty members' homes.

Our girls' program provided instruction in math, English, social studies, and science for sixty eighth grade girls. The program was also held on the Scripps College campus. Mrs. Marilyn Monsour was program director. In addition to the subjects mentioned, the girls had orchestral instruction, languages (French and Spanish), art, modern dance, gymnastics, and swimming. Bicycles were secured for the girls' program, and it was a real pleasure to see our girls cycling around Claremont. Since the summer months, many Claremont residents have indicated how delighted they were with seeing the youthful enthusiasm at concerts and in public places in Claremont.

Our ninth grade program was held at The Thacher School. The director of the program was Mr. Leslie Larsen, a regular Thacher faculty member. As was the case at each one of the participating independent schools, considerable emphasis was placed on written and verbal expressions, math, science, and social studies. At the conclusion of the summer program the Thacher students produced a literary magazine. One of the poems contained in the magazine reflects some of the intellectual and personal probings that we found throughout the program.

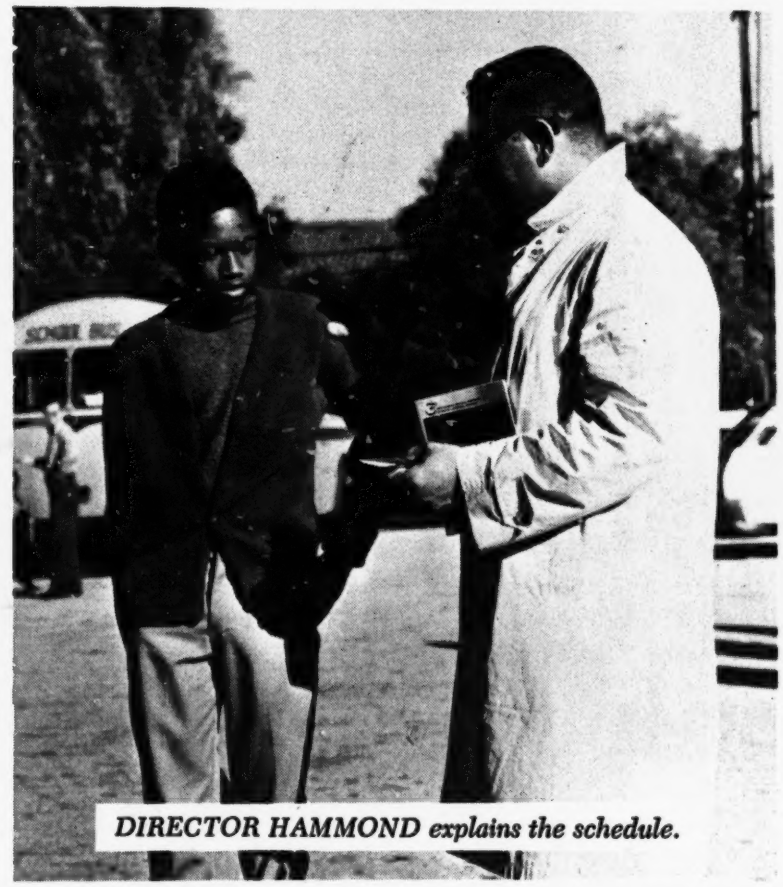
The Bat (by Ali Nebo, 9th grade)

Little bat among the trees,
Who flies aloft in the midnight breeze,
Who flies with such mysterious grace,
And has a mysteriously wicked face,
To many people you strike terror,
Because of a disease of which you are the bearer.

To many, I myself have struck terror;
I have done wrong, and I am aware.
So come down beside me, my little friend,
And together we shall amend.
But what's this I see – it's coming of Dawn.
Well, my little friend, you should have been gone.
You, like myself, must hide from the day;
So together we shall hide, far away.

At Midland this summer, we found a great deal of intellectual and physical ferment. Quite frankly we had entertained some doubts as to how adequately 10th grade city boys would take to the rustic nature of Midland. Happily it can be reported that these preconceived fears had little basis in fact. Our POF youngsters came to find Midland exactly to their liking. It is certain that Mr. Paul Raymond, our Midland program director, had a great deal to do with this. The Midland philosophy tended to encourage a new sense of independence and a commitment to the total academic environment which many of our boys also found stimulating.

We were very fortunate in that we were able to attract to our various programs some outstanding staff personalities.



DIRECTOR HAMMOND explains the schedule.

I am immediately reminded of Steve Schaffran, a 1967 graduate of Pomona College and a Rhodes Scholar this year at Oxford, who as a person established among many of our eighth grade students new insights into Middle Eastern affairs. Also I am reminded of Frehiwet Gabremascal, a Scripps College student from Ethiopia, who taught French in our Westridge program.

Prior to the Fall-Winter program individual POF students had indicated areas in which they wanted to do additional work. Our summer experience had indicated that our students especially needed additional work in both mathematics and English. A program was devised which involved each student in two forty-five minute periods of instruction, one in mathematics and the other in English. POF students were assigned to seminar-type classes on the basis of summer residential evaluations. Groupings were homogeneous according to grade and level of subject competence.

Those groups, however, which showed the greatest academic needs were maintained at class membership of three.

The maximum membership in any group was set at six. Tutors were to be volunteers from the students at The Claremont Colleges. At first it was believed that this would be a difficult task. Our recruitment drive began with a committee of fourteen students, most of whom had been teaching assistants in our summer program, headed by Miss Eileen Wilson and Mr. Ken Frank. The college students were encouraged to devise their own recruitment program. Within one week we had secured over three hundred volunteers.

On Saturdays the buses arrive at 9 o'clock a.m. A brief orientation is held at that time. From 9:30 until 11:30 each POF student attends a seminar in English and mathematics. All students eat lunch at any one of the Claremont Colleges dining halls from 11:30 to 12:30.

At 12:30, all students attend classes in which they themselves have indicated an interest. One fascinating area has been the computer training at Harvey Mudd College. We have ten tenth grade boys who are now in the computer training program and after only four Saturdays were able to do some elementary programming. In February another group of ten boys will begin advanced computer training at the Pomona College computer center. Here too we expect a high degree of achievement.

The afternoon schedule offers a great deal of diversity and was devised according to the interests of the 188 youngsters in the program. The range of our afternoon interests can only be appreciated by listing the courses:

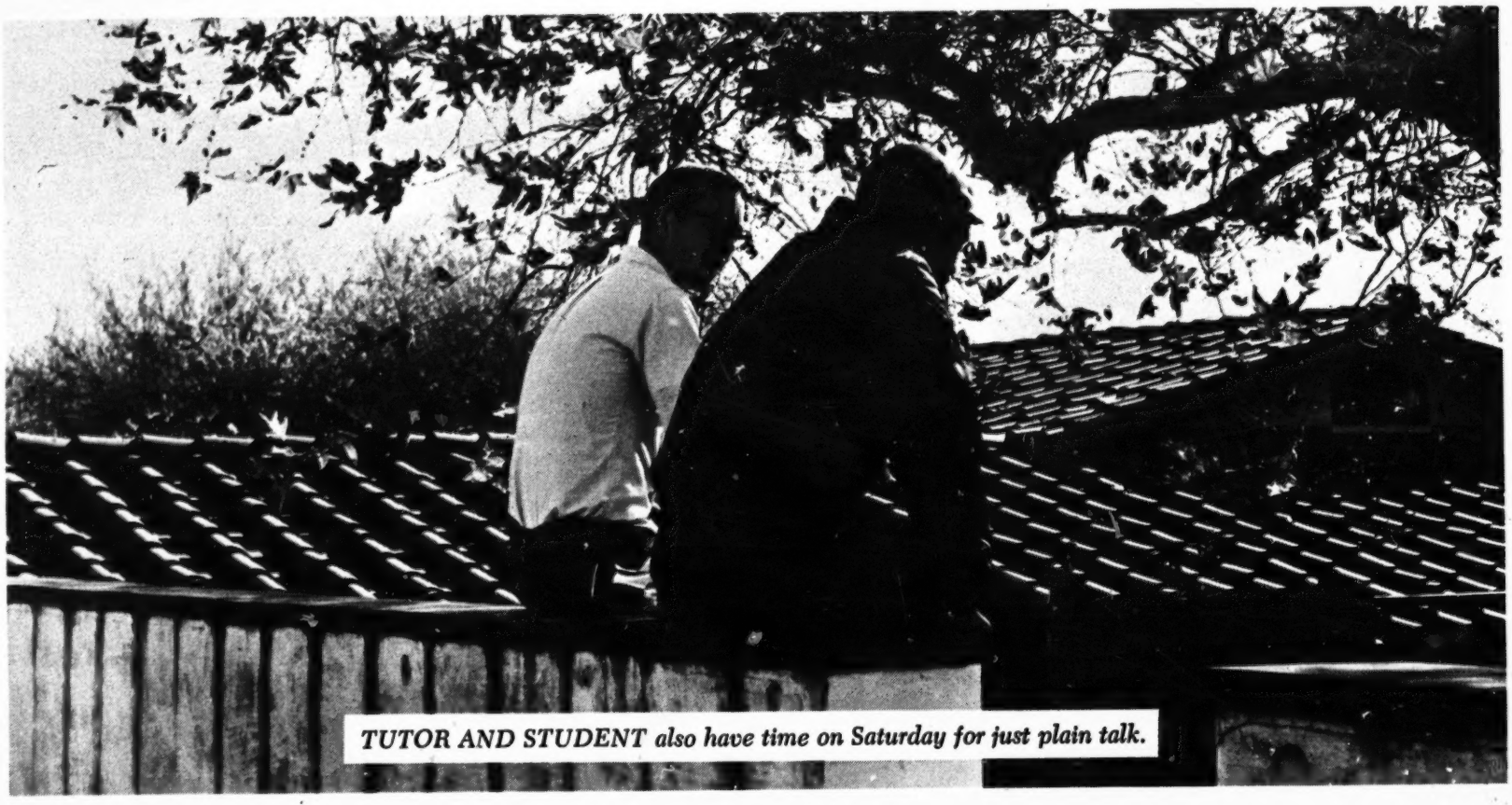
Social Studies; Drama; Art; Language (French, German, Spanish, Kiswahili); Creative Writing; Modern Dance; Music (practical and appreciation); Math; Electronics; Photography; General Science; Science Specialties (Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Biochemistry); and Radio Announcing and Engineering.

A great many of our students' parents participate in the program by providing supervision on the Saturday buses. Throughout the year parents have shown a great deal of interest in the education of their sons and daughters. Some very interesting things have occurred as parents have become more involved and knowledgeable about POF. Recently in discussions with parents the suggestion was made that universities and colleges could contribute significantly to the alleviation of urban educational problems by establishing "satellite preparatory schools." Such schools could be residential or day schools and would be located on campuses or in close proximity to colleges or universities. Such schools could utilize many of the facilities of a parent college or university.

Parents have also indicated that they too are interested in furthering their own education and understandings of the problems of a highly technological society. We are now in the process of creating seminars for POF parents in areas in which they are interested.

Another rather pleasant problem has arisen. Many schools have been faced with the problem of "drop-outs." We are now faced with the problem of "drop-ins." Our drop-ins are not regularly selected POF students but friends of POF students who have learned about the Project. Somehow or other they manage to board our busses in Los Angeles and Compton, in some instances as early as 7 a.m., and spend their Saturdays at Claremont attending classes.

Not so long ago a mother informed us that her son, an eighth grade POF student, was spending his spare time tutoring youngsters at the elementary school from which he had graduated. In a very meaningful sense the torch of education that was lit in Claremont is being passed on.



TUTOR AND STUDENT also have time on Saturday for just plain talk.